

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communications system comprising:
a polling agent for polling an electronic mailbox to retrieve unique identifiers (UID's) of electronic messages; and
a database for storing the UID's resulting from the polling,
wherein the polling agent is operative for polling the electronic mailbox and retrieving only those UID's that are newer than the UID's from a previous polling to determine that new messages are available.
2. A communications system according to Claim 1, wherein said polling agent is operative for issuing a single command for obtaining the total number of electronic messages.
3. A communications system according to Claim 2, wherein said polling agent is operative for issuing a STAT command for obtaining the total number of electronic messages.
4. A communications system according to Claim 1, wherein said polling agent is operative for retrieving a webpage that contains a list of most recent messages retrieved within the electronic mailbox.
5. A communications system according to Claim 1, wherein said polling agent is operative for shortening a polling interval of an electronic mailbox when there is

recent activity within an electronic mailbox to provide electronic mail to a user in near real-time.

6. A communications system according to Claim 1, wherein said polling agent is operative for issuing a command for a unique identifier listing (UIDL) to determine the UID's of messages on a mail server.

7. A communications system comprising:
a wireless communications device having a mail user agent;

a mobile office platform operative with the mail user agent for accessing one or more electronic mailboxes of the mail user agent using a plurality of protocol specific connectors, said mobile office platform including a polling agent for polling an electronic mailbox of the mail user agent to retrieve unique identifiers (UID's) of electronic messages, and a database for storing the UID's resulting from the polling, wherein the polling agent is operative for polling the electronic mailbox and retrieving only those UID's that are newer than the UID's from previous polling to determine that new messages are available.

8. A communications system according to Claim 7, wherein said mail user agent is operative for accessing the mobile office platform using a POP, IMAP or webmail protocol.

9. A communications system according to Claim 7, wherein said plurality of protocol specific connectors comprises a POP connector for accessing POP mailboxes, an

IMAP connector for accessing IMAP mailboxes, or a connector for accessing mail from an Exchange server.

10. A communications system according to Claim 7, wherein said polling agent is operative for issuing a single command for obtaining the total number of electronic messages.

11. A communications system according to Claim 10, wherein said polling agent is operative for issuing a STAT command for obtaining the total number of electronic messages.

12. A communications system according to Claim 7, wherein said polling agent is operative for retrieving a webpage that contains a list of most recent messages retrieved within the electronic mailbox.

13. A communications system according to Claim 7, wherein said polling agent is operative for shortening a polling interval of an electronic mailbox when there is recent activity within an electronic mailbox to provide electronic mail to a user in near real-time.

14. A communications system according to Claim 7, wherein said polling agent is operative for issuing a command for a unique identifier listing (UIDL) to determine the UID's of messages on a mail server.

15. A method of polling electronic mailboxes comprising the step of:

polling an electronic mailbox to retrieve unique identifiers (UID's) of electronic messages; and retrieving only those UID's that are newer than the UID's from a previous polling to determine that new messages are available.

16. A method according to Claim 15, wherein the step of polling further comprises the step of issuing a unique identifier listing (UIDL) command.

17. A method according to Claim 16, wherein the step of polling further comprises the step of issuing a STAT command.

18. A method according to Claim 15, wherein the step of polling further comprises the step of retrieving the UID of the most recent message received on a mail server.

19. A method according to Claim 15, and further comprising the step of checking if the retrieved UID of the most recent message is contained within a database of UID's obtained from previous polls as indicative that no new messages have been received.

20. A method according to Claim 15, and further comprising the step of storing within a database a record of the UID's.

21. A method according to Claim 15, and further comprising the step of storing the UID for a plurality of source electronic mailboxes.

22. A method according to Claim 15, and further comprising the step of shortening a polling interval of an electronic mailbox when there is recent activity within an electronic mailbox to provide electronic mail to a user in near real-time fashion.

23. A method according to Claim 15 and further comprising the step of retrieving a message only when the UID is determined to be newer than the UID's from a previous polling.

24. A method according to Claim 15, and further comprising the step of determining a current message count from a mail server and comparing the current message count to the number of UID's stored from a previous poll and considering that there are new messages when the new message count is more.

25. A method of polling electronic mailboxes comprising the steps of:

retrieving a webpage that contains a list of most recent messages received within an electronic mailbox;

storing the unique identifiers (UID's) starting with the most recent messages stored within the list; and

storing the UID's until a UID is seen that was retrieved within a previous poll indicative that all UID's stored in a current poll are from new messages.

26. A method according to Claim 25, and further comprising the step of requesting a new webpage if the

previously stored UID is not present in the first webpage.

27. A method according to Claim 25, and further comprising the step of ceasing to obtain a new webpage when a UID is seen that was stored from a previous poll.

28. A method according to Claim 25, and further comprising the step of shortening a polling interval of an electronic mailbox when there is recent activity within an electronic mailbox to provide electronic mail to a user in near real-time fashion.

29. A method of polling electronic mailboxes comprising the steps of:

polling an electronic mailbox by issuing a command to retrieve the current number of messages located on a mail server and retrieving the unique identifier (UID) of the most recent message; and

checking if the UID of the most recent message is in a list of stored UID's obtained from previous polls.

30. A method according to Claim 29, and further comprising the step of determining that new messages have occurred if the UID is stored from a previous poll.

31. A method according to Claim 29, and further comprising the step of issuing a STAT command to obtain the current number of messages located on a mail server.

32. A method according to Claim 29, and further comprising the step of issuing a command for a unique

identifier listing (UIDL) to determine the UID's of messages on a mail server.

33. A method according to Claim 29, and further comprising the step of shortening a polling interval of an electronic mailbox when there is recent activity within an electronic mailbox to provide electronic mail to a user in near real-time fashion.